



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 6

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DALLAS, TX 75202-2733

MAR 12 2010



Ms. Peggy M. Hatch
Secretary
Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality
P.O. Box 4303
Baton Rouge, LA 70321-4303

Dear Ms. Hatch:

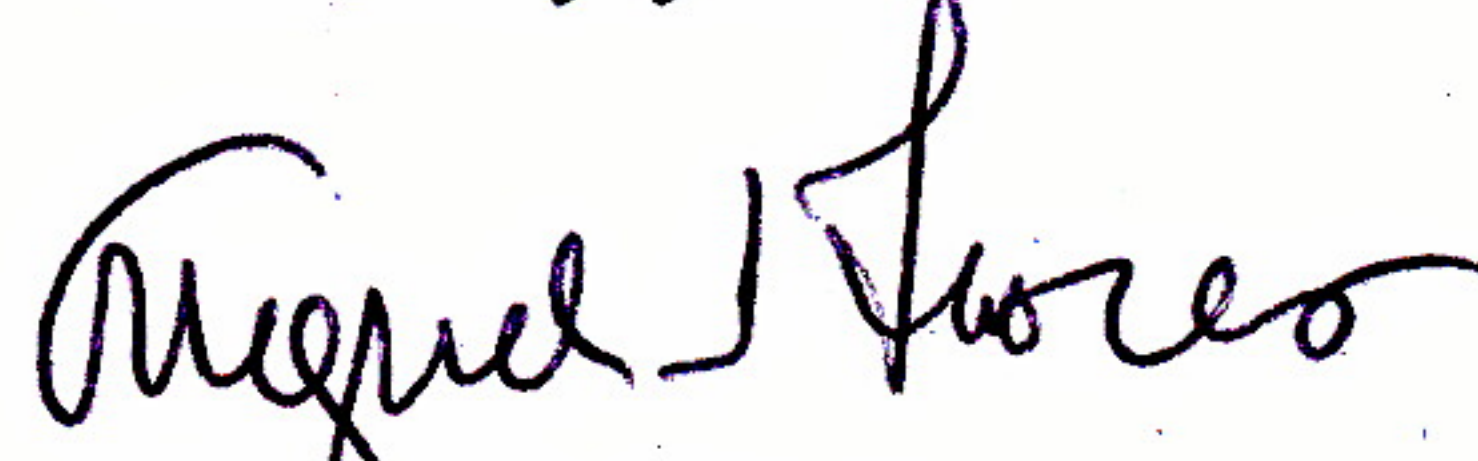
On February 17, 2009, the President signed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) in order to preserve and create jobs and promote economic recovery. ARRA provided \$6 billion to the State Revolving Fund (SRF) Programs to provide long-term environmental and economic benefits through the investment in water and wastewater infrastructure and to support water quality management planning activities. The last year has posed a great challenge for the State SRF Programs. It was no small feat to receive funding nearly six times a typical year's allotment in February, 2009 and to have the funds in projects under contract by February, 2010 while adhering to the novel provisions that ARRA brought to the SRF such as the 20 percent Green Project Reserve, Davis-Bacon, 50 percent subsidization, and Buy American requirements.

I would like to thank you and your SRF Program management and staff for all of your hard work, dedication, and long hours that went into meeting the February 17, 2010, deadline for all SRF funds to be under contract or construction. Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ)'s approach of distributing the ARRA funds as 100 percent principal forgiveness to more than fifty Louisiana communities was laudable, and I am excited about the interest that has been generated in the State's Clean Water SRF Program. The benefits of these funds will be felt beyond those fifty communities through the jobs that are created by these projects. LDEQ also met its Green Project Reserve requirement of \$8,616,282. We appreciate and applaud the extraordinary efforts put forth by Mr. Bijan Sharafkhani and his SRF staff.

I would also like to thank you and your 604(b) program management and staff for all of your hard work that went into meeting the statutory deadline. The LDEQ exerted considerable effort to get contracts and subawards finalized before the February 17, 2010 deadline for commitment of ARRA funds. The LDEQ met this deadline despite encountering delays during the procurement process. The LDEQ also has been very conscientious in meeting the Section 1512 reporting requirements under ARRA.

Though the demands of ARRA have been great, LDEQ clearly rose to the occasion and succeeded in meeting the mandated deadline. Notwithstanding the superb efforts of your SRF and 604(b) program management and staff, I attribute much of LDEQ's ARRA success to Dr. Alex Appeaning's untiring efforts. On more than one occasion, members of my Management staff visited LDEQ, and on each of those occasions, Dr. Appeaning availed himself to the meetings/discussions, and his leadership and personal involvement helped assure us that LDEQ would clearly meet all ARRA objectives. The experiences of this last year have engendered an even closer and more cooperative working relationship between our two Agencies that I know will benefit all of us as we continue to work together to meet the additional objectives of the Recovery Act and embrace the future challenges of protecting human health and the environment.

Sincerely yours,



Miguel I. Flores
Director

Water Quality Protection Division

Many thanks, Alex

cc: Alex Appeaning, Ph.D. Deputy Secretary (LDEQ)
Mr. Bijan Sharafkhani, Administrator (LDEQ)
Emelise Cormier (LDEQ)